

**Safety Review Committee  
July 19, 2002  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

**Minutes**

**Members Present**

Eduardo Saiz (for Joel Ager), Ben Feinberg (Chair), Pat Thomas (for Ed Lampo, Secretary), Peter Lichty, Steven Lundgren, Augusto Macchiavelli, Othon Monteiro, Linfeng Rao, Linda Smith, Scott Taylor, Linda Wuy

**Members Absent**

John Bowerman, Dennis Collins, Sharon Doyle, Mack Kennedy, Donald Lucas, Ronald Madaras, Ted Sopher, Weyland Wong, Hisao Yokota

**Others Present**

Michael Banda, Don Bell, John Chernowski, David McGraw, Robin Wendt, Otis Wong

**Previous Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by the SRC chair, Ben Feinberg. The May minutes were approved as submitted.

**Old Business**

**Supervisor Training:** Ben Feinberg met with Robin Wendt to develop guidelines. A draft will be presented to the SRC.

**Matrix employees:** Ben Feinberg met earlier in the week with Don Van Acker and several people who had commented on the issue of responsibility for matrix employees' safety. Don Van Acker plans to develop a set of guidelines that will undergo SRC review and be added to the Regulations and Procedures manual. The basic approach is to assign primary responsibility to the Home Division; however, Divisions will be able to use a Memorandum of Understanding to assign responsibilities differently.

**Ergo Letter:** Some time ago, Klaus Berkner issued a letter on ergonomics issues and that ergo funding be primarily at the Division level. Under Integrated Safety Management, it is a programmatic responsibility to provide ergonomic reviews and funds for ergonomic equipment. Small programs that are not block-funded have difficulty paying for ergonomics. Not all ergonomics problems are with computer workstations -- Life Sciences has repetitive pipette users. Ben Feinberg met with Sally Benson. She is willing to set up a pilot program for one year, providing a maximum of \$20,000 from the Lab. It would require 50/50 cost sharing with Divisions. An average workstation upgrade costs about \$1,000. An ergonomic injury costs the Lab an average of approximately \$7,000 from general overhead. (Peter Lichty can provide data on costs.) Sally wants the SRC to develop guidelines for participation in the program. Injuries are classified as "ergonomic" if they are gradual injuries rather than caused by a discrete event. Genomics Division has the most ergonomics injuries, but they are from pinching tubes, not computer workstations. Peter Lichty will look at records of workstation-related injuries to help decide which Divisions should participate in the pilot program. SRC members from those Divisions will be asked to develop draft guidelines.

**Biosafety Committee:** Peter Lichty has agreed to serve as the SRC Liaison with the Biosafety Committee. They have been looking at the Genomics Division's sequencing of DNA fragments from pathogenic organisms at the Walnut Creek facility.

## **MESH Reviews**

### **EH&S**

Ben Feinberg thanked all the EH&S Division members who assisted in the MESH review. The review team found evidence of strong commitment to safety, including frequent management walkthroughs, performance review expectations, an active self-assessment program, and an accident review board. All issues identified in the previous MESH have been addressed. The team identified management of legacy waste as a concern. Characterization and separation of unidentified waste is potentially hazardous to EH&S employees doing the work. The Lab as a whole needs to address this problem. Programs need to take more responsibility for departing researchers. Hazardous waste disposal is on the departure checklist, but it is difficult to enforce and the requirements need to be better understood by supervisors.

David McGraw, EH&S Division Director, thanked the MESH team and EH&S personnel who participated in the review. The Division's mission statement, developed in cooperation with the SRC, includes protection of workers, the public, and the environment. As an example of the public safety mission, David presented local newspaper announcements that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that LBNL will not be added to the federal Superfund cleanup list. EH&S tries to hire the best staff and set high performance standards.

EH&S partners with line management, bringing advice and expertise. Many EH&S professionals belong to professional organizations that have codes of ethics requiring them to make decisions based on science. There are currently about 120 people in EH&S, including 70 EH&S professionals and support staff. They are trying to hold down costs, and spread the cost smoothly over the Lab. There are six groups reporting directly to David McGraw. The Fire Department has recently been outsourced to Alameda County. Don Bell, as leader of the Office of Assessment and Assurance (OAA) reports to David McGraw and also has a dotted-line reporting responsibility to Dr. Shank. OAA has only three people and assists the SRC in coordinating MESH reviews.

EH&S expects Group Leaders to perform workplace inspections. The Division management reviews meeting minutes and visits group meetings to ensure safety is discussed. The Division Safety Committee is required to have professional membership and management leadership. The Accident Review Board has been used as a model for other divisions. It is led by senior management and meets as needed with injured employees and their supervisors. The accident reviews focus on solving problems, not punishing employees.

Self-Assessment performance criteria are negotiated with the Safety Coordinators and Division Deputies. In performance year '99, there were two Radiological Work Authorization violations. In performance year '00, there was an NCAR, or non-compliance "ticket", for inaccurate waste characterization of a scintillation fluid container. Therefore, now, all scintillation fluid waste is characterized as radioactive. In performance year '02, there were some hazardous waste

handling problems that resulted in the termination of employees who did not meet performance standards.

The Hazardous Waste Handling Facility manager is the leader for legacy waste. EH&S has found more legacy chemical containers than anticipated, but expects to complete processing of Environmental Management legacy wastes this year. The MESH team identified some disconnects of communications between the waste characterizations and handling groups. A Health Physics person has been assigned to Waste Management to ensure radioactive wastes are identified.

There was a recent contamination incident involving legacy waste characterization. A technician experienced some contamination while characterizing carbon 14 and left for lunch without surveying his hands and feet or changing out of his lab coat. A government vehicle and part of the building were contaminated. EH&S is asking Health Physics and the SRC (Scott Taylor) to participate in a process review to identify procedures and competencies.

There seems to be increasing turnover of EH&S personnel. Recently several EH&S staff have transferred to LLNL.

The Fire Department has a higher accident rate than the rest of Berkeley Lab. EH&S tries to encourage safety by rewarding good performance. Fire and law enforcement personnel are in a special Labor Code category where illnesses are assumed to be job-related. With the outsourcing of the Berkeley Lab Fire Department, on-site accidents will continue to be counted as LBNL accidents. Our firefighters are being required to take Move Smart training. Alameda County Fire Department won a competitive bid to manage our fire services. Although they did not win the bid, the process provided an opportunity to improve relations with the City of Berkeley.

### **Computing Sciences.**

Robin Wendt thanked Computing Sciences Directorate and MESH team members for their participation in the review. Michael Banda, Deputy, gave the presentation for Director Bill McCurdy. Computing Sciences Directorate is now a cluster of 3 Divisions: Information Technologies and Services Division (ITSD), the National Energy Research Scientific Computing (NERSC) Center, and Computational Research Division. NERSC is a National User Facility and is block funded. ITSD is funded by overhead and recharges. The Computational Research Division has many funding sources, including campus Math Department faculty and appointments. The safety program is run out of the Directorate for all three Divisions. The staff consists of approximately 600 people, mostly computing science engineers and technicians. They are spread out in several locations, including the Oakland computing center, Bldg. 941 in Berkeley, and several buildings on site. They expect to be moving out of Bldg. 51 soon.

The primary hazard is ergonomics. There have also been some lifting injuries. Accident rates have improved since the previous MESH review. The Directorate requires classroom ergonomics training and plans to require refresher training every 3-4 years. The Ergonomic Training CD is used only for people who never come on site. Supervisors and managers are required to take the new ES&H for Supervisors course. There is an active Accident Review Board.

There were no MESH findings. Two concerns were identified.

- Documentation of ES&H performance expectations in P2Rs was uneven. This is being corrected in the new PRD process.
- Follow-up actions recommended after workstation evaluations were not being tracked systematically. Computing Sciences has begun using the LCATS system to track implementation of ergonomic improvement recommendations, with feedback on implementation through the group leads.

Computing Sciences anticipates that ergonomic issues will change as technologies change. More people are using laptops as their primary workstations and there are no good ergonomic standards for them. Flat screens, infrared, and wireless communications technologies may cause new problems. CSD expects to be working with EH&S on these issues.

There are some confined spaces. There are a few areas with potential for hazardous atmospheres from halon fire protection systems. There are special access procedures for the tape storage silos in Oakland, because of hazardous atmosphere and robotics.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Thomas (for Ed Lampo)

Next Scheduled SRC Meeting: September 20, 2002, 10:00 AM – Noon, Bldg.90-Rm.1099